

# READERS WRITE



## MORE PEDIGREE FOR A PEACH

October 4, 2005

Dear Mr. Halweil:

I very much enjoy your publication. I must comment on your article in issue No. 3 relative to the Gardiner's Island white peach entitled "A Peach With Pedigree."

In the early 1990's, I kept bees at "The Orchard" on Mitchell's Lane in Bridgehampton to pollinate their fruit trees and strawberries. I had a significant honey crop that year and asked the orchard manager, Todd Bishop, if he would retail the honey for me. His comment was, "Run the fruit and vegetable stand for me, sell your honey, and keep the entire proceeds of the honey sales." So I went for it.

During the first week in October, the white peach surfaced. The skin was poorly colored, the meat was a very light green, but the flavor was like nothing you ever tasted before. The peach, in appearance, had no sales appeal and to tempt potential buyers, I would squeeze the fruit from an end, subsequently removing the skin and let the customer sample the meat. That's all it took.

Mr. Bishop then told me the story of the Gardiner's Island Peach. I assume the orchard owner, John Libbey, also knew of the peaches.

How the trees got to "The Orchard," I do not remember but they probably came from Richard Hendrickson. I understand most fruit trees have been removed from the Mitchell's Lane property and I certainly hope someone—the seller, the buyer or the transplanter—knows the whereabouts of the pedigrees.

Thank you for your interesting article and publication.

Very truly yours,  
Donald S. Sausser  
Townsend, DELAWARE

## MISLEADING AND UNTRUE

November 12, 2005

Dear Editor:

I take issue with statements made in the article "Grapes Without Pesticides" published in the last issue (No. 3) of *Edible East End* that are at best misleading and at worst untrue. The title of the article, "Grapes Without Pesticides," is misleading and inaccurate. All commercial grape growers worldwide, including those that are genuinely "organic" or "biodynamic," use pesticides, including approved sulfur sprays, repeatedly during the growing season. Fungal diseases must be and are pre-

vented by spraying fungicides prophylactically from six to 12 times per season in virtually every grape district in the world.

Grape growers in our rainy Long Island region who describe their viticulture as "almost organic" or "almost biodynamic" or who claim obviously exaggerated reductions in pesticide use are misleading the public and should reconsider. It is a form of "green" one-upmanship practiced at the expense of other growers in the district who are also committed to viticultural practices that reduce environmental impact, but don't make exaggerated claims or imply they are "organic." Each one of us knows that a genuinely "organic" grape grower on Long Island would lose most of their crop to downy mildew and black rot every season because there is not an "organic" fungicide to prevent these serious endemic diseases.

A more useful approach would be for growers to embrace the progressive, emerging "Sustainable Viticulture Program" being developed by cooperating grape growers and Cornell's Cooperative Extension program under the direction of Alice Wise. Most of the "low-impact" viticultural practices used or advocated by our "almost organic" brethren are being investigated systematically by Alice Wise's program here on Long Island and when shown to be effective will be "extended" to the grape growing community at large. In the meantime, it is fine for independent growers to help push the envelope toward a softer, more sustainable viticulture and be proud of their accomplishments. However, it is not proper to exaggerate for commercial purposes.

Larry Perrine  
CEO, Channing Daughters Winery,  
Bridgehampton, NEW YORK

## Working the Land

*Anthony Musnicki plows the farm,  
Sagaponack, NY.*

We invite our readers to submit historic photos of cooking, gardening, and farmers and fishers toiling the East End's soil and waters. Please email [info@edibleeastend.com](mailto:info@edibleeastend.com).

